



# ST. JAMES BASILICA of Jamestown

Parish Newsletter

APRIL 2014



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## The Joy of Bringing Christ to Others

*"If you really want to grow in love, come back to the Eucharist."  
-Blessed Teresa of Calcutta*

If there is one thing Glory Ebertz enjoys giving, it's Jesus.

"I feel very strongly about this ministry," Glory says. "My husband, John, died 17 years ago, and I took care of him when he was at home. An Extraordinary Minister came and brought him the Eucharist when he was homebound, and so did my brother, Fr. Richard Rudd (now deceased). After John died, I was able to start bringing the Eucharist to other people who were homebound. As Fr. Richard said, 'It's payback time!' As a family, we always felt that this ministry was something very important."

Currently, Glory serves as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion to both our local nursing homes, Ave Maria Village and Eventide at Hi-Acres Manor Nursing Home. With all of her heart, she enjoys bringing the Eucharist to the residents who are not able to communicate during the



liturgies offered weekly at the homes by our parish priests.

"I have been doing this ministry for a long, long time!" Glory says. "I used to bring the Eucharist to the homebound as well, but now I am not able to do that anymore. This ministry is not just something I feel I *have* to do. I feel really good about doing it. I feel blessed to have the opportunity to share the Eucharist with people when people need it the most. I believe God has given me the chance to do it because I love it so much.

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622 1 Ave S  
Jamestown, ND 58401  
701-252-0119  
www.stjamesbasilica.org



## Palm Sunday *Will You Carry Christ on the Journey?*

**A**s we continue our Lenten journey this month, we celebrate Passion Sunday, also known as Palm Sunday, on April 13. The readings will focus our attention on two major events in our salvation history. In our Palm Sunday reading, we hear of Christ's triumphant journey into Jerusalem where He is joyfully greeted by the crowds. People throw down palms and cloaks in His path as they shout "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" (Mt. 21:9)

Yet Christ does not come with the splendor often surrounding royalty.

Christ chose to make his glorious entrance into the holy city of Jerusalem riding a donkey – Christ calls this humble animal into service on his bittersweet journey that by the week's end will lead to the cross on Calvary.

Likewise, Christ has chosen each of us to carry Him during our life on earth. Like the donkey, we often don't feel fit to carry out the work of the King of Kings. We often think our gifts are not good enough for the King or that they are not needed.

Nevertheless, He calls us and He eagerly waits for our response.

Christ's journey into the Holy City continues today. We are walking with Christ now and He asks us to humbly offer ourselves in service to Him. This journey with Christ will not always be easy. Remember how the shouts of approval greeting Christ on Palm Sunday are quickly replaced with jeering mockery on Good Friday.

As we each respond to Christ's call to serve the Church, we will likely experience times when our feeling of victory and triumph are replaced with sacrifices that sometimes seem too much to carry. But we must be steadfast in our response to Christ. We must be committed to carrying Him on our journey here on earth as we live out our lives as disciples.

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A Letter from Our Pastor

## Finding Holiness Through Stewardship

Dear Parishioners,

As I prepare and look forward to this Easter, it has occurred to me that last Easter was the first for our Holy Father Francis as our Pope. You may recall that he was elected on March 13 and installed on March 19, the Feast of St. Joseph. Traditionally the Pope, after he has celebrated Mass on Easter Sunday, goes to the balcony in St. Peter overlooking the plaza below, and delivers what is known as his “*Urbi et Orbi*” message followed by a blessing of all. Thus, only 12 days after officially becoming pope, Francis stood on the balcony to speak to us.

“*Urbi et Orbi*” means “for the city and the world.” The significance of that is for us to realize this message is for the people of Rome, but also for the entire Catholic world, including each of us. The impact of Pope Francis is obvious to many of us, but we need to remember this happy and holy man standing on that balcony last year and beginning his discourse proclaiming, “Happy Easter! Happy Easter! I would like Easter to enter every heart, for it is there that God wants to sow this Good News: Jesus is risen; there is hope for you; you are no longer in the power of sin, of evil. Love has triumphed; mercy has been



victorious! The mercy of God always triumphs.”

Pope Francis has shown us through the love he has spread and the holiness he has represented what it means to be a good steward. For many years, the Easter Sunday Mass was done inside St. Peter Basilica and then the pope processed to the balcony for the *Urbi et Orbi* proclamation. Pope Francis opted for an open-air Easter Mass; however, so rather than the few thousand who might attend inside, it would be possible for literally one hundred thousand or more outside. He wore simple plain white, unadorned vestments. He celebrated alone, without the scores

of Cardinals normally with him. And, after the Mass, he moved through the crowd in an open Popemobile without protection or bullet-proof glass, pausing frequently to shake hands, embrace people, and make direct contact with them.

Are we not called to that same kind of simplicity and that same loving approach to those around us through stewardship? Stewardship, sharing and using our gifts to glorify God, is an act of love. We often state that we are all called to holiness. The truth is that Jesus did not just call us to holiness; He commanded us. Stewardship and holiness are not an ideal; they are not impossible for us; they are within our reach, but we must make that effort to act. As we complete our Easter foundations, and as we rejoice together on this holiest of days, Easter, let us model our lives after Christ. Let us be stewards with love and thanksgiving.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Al Bitz  
Pastor

*As we complete our Easter foundations, and as we rejoice together on this holiest of days, Easter, let us model our lives after Christ. Let us be stewards with love and thanksgiving.*



## Front Row Seats to the Greatest Event on Earth *Altar Servers at St. James Basilica*



By supporting the priest during Eucharist, an altar server receives the honor of close proximity to the central mystery of our faith — Christ becoming present in the Eucharist.

“I ask our servers, ‘How many of you would like front row seats at a concert or an NFL game?’” says Peggy Vandal, Altar Server Ministry leader. “That would be exciting, but here you have front row seats to the most amazing event on earth — the consecration. You are giving to Jesus and helping others experience this event, the Mass [Eucharist], more fully.”

At St. James Basilica, young men and women who have received First Eucharist and Confirmation are invited to become altar servers. They will join other altar servers who serve at Eucharist together and gather for special events throughout the year.

Once a young man or woman expresses interest in being an altar

server, training takes place on a one-on-one basis. He or she will receive a DVD of a simulated Eucharist where the priest and experienced altar servers go through the steps of serving. A time can also be scheduled to come into the basilica and hold the chalice or carry the crucifix.

“A lot of times, siblings serve together, so they feel more comfortable to begin this ministry,” Peggy says. “Sometimes, the first child will feel more comfortable if he or she has a walk-through with one of the staff members, and we understand and are willing to do that. The older servers are always helping the new ones out during [Eucharist].”

When they begin serving, new servers fill out a short form listing the Eucharist they attend with their family and what times they would be available. The schedule is usually completed two months in advance

with three altar servers, one cross bearer and two acolytes, for each weekend Eucharist.

“During Christmas and Easter the schedule is done individually through the mail, closer to the holiday,” says Peggy. “If an altar server is needed for a funeral, the parish arranges for servers either by contacting parents for the weekend or in the summer or by calling the school and asking for a fifth or sixth-grader to serve. The server will miss school, but this is one of the corporal works of mercy. For weddings, the bride and groom sometimes will have altar servers already decided upon. If not, we’d help schedule them.”

In addition to serving at Eucharist, the group of nearly 50 altar servers looks forward to their special events. In the past the altar servers have gone bowling, swimming, and have enjoyed pizza and ice cream.

“We try to do one to two gatherings a year to show our appreciation for their important ministry,” Peggy says. “We want them to know they’re appreciated. In the past, we have asked the Knights of Columbus and the Tabernacle Society to donate money to help with gatherings. Just this last year, we took them to a RedHawks baseball game. They were welcomed to the ballpark with a message on the jumbotron, and we received an autographed baseball from the RedHawks.”

The gatherings are not only a way to show the parish’s appreciation for our servers, but also a way to bring the servers together for fellowship outside of serving during Eucharist. Our altar servers look forward to these events throughout the year.

“Going to fun activities like bowling, swimming, and the

RedHawks game,” altar servers Paul Vandal and Noah Ripplinger reply when asked what their favorite part about being a server is.

Other altar servers, including Joseph Lauinger, Carissa Kraft, and Monica Ripplinger, enjoy their ministry because they “help the church and help the priest.”

For other servers, including Keith Levin, Jasmine Hemmer, and McKenna Hemmer, the proximity

to the altar is what they enjoy most about altar serving.

“I love being an altar server because I get to serve – literally – at Jesus’ altar, and get to be so close during the consecration,” says Jessica Vandal

If you would like to join the Altar Server Ministry at St. James Basilica, please contact the parish office at 701-252-0119 or Peggy Vandal at 701-252-5002.

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 – Peggy Vandal, Altar Server Ministry leader



*Altar Servers at St. James Basilica*





## Divine Mercy Sunday and the Chaplet of Divine Mercy

*"I want the whole world to know my infinite mercy.  
I want to give unimaginable graces to those who trust in my mercy." (Diary, 687).*

In the 1930s, Sr. Maria Faustina Kowalska of the Most Blessed Sacrament, a Sister of Our Lady of Mercy, received a message from the Lord that she was to live her life as a model of Christ's merciful love and spread Christ's mercy throughout the world. She proceeded to offer up all of her personal sufferings in atonement for the sins of others. She kept a secret diary in which she wrote of God's mercy, as well as about her special devotion to Mary Immaculate and to the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Reconciliation, which gave her strength. Sr. Faustina's diary, *Divine Mercy in My Soul*, serves as the handbook for the devotion to the Divine Mercy. In it, we read of the message of mercy that she received from Christ.

On April 30, 2000, Sr. Faustina Kowalska was canonized by Pope John Paul II. Then, on May 23, 2000, the Congregation for Divine Worship decreed that "throughout the world, the second Sunday of Easter will receive the name Divine Mercy Sunday, a perennial invitation to the Christian world to face, with confidence in divine benevolence, the difficulties and trials that humankind will experience in the years to come."

On Divine Mercy Sunday — occurring this year on April 27 — all parishioners are encouraged to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet, always remembering and practicing the essential "ABCs" of Divine Mercy — ask for mercy, be merciful to others, and completely trust in Jesus.



### *Format of the Divine Mercy Chaplet*

"Chaplet" simply refers to the prayers counted on a rosary. The Lord said to St. Faustina, "You will recite this chaplet on the beads of the Rosary in the following Manner:"

#### **Begin with:**

One "Our Father," one "Hail Mary," and the "I Believe in God."

#### **On the "Our Father Beads" say:**

Eternal Father, I offer You the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Your dearly beloved Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, in atonement for our sins and those of the whole world.

#### **On the "Hail Mary Beads" say:**

For the sake of His sorrowful Passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

#### **In conclusion, three times recite these words:**

Holy God, Holy Mighty One, Holy Immortal One, have mercy on us and on the whole world.

# Coming Into the Church Through RCIA

The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults is a very significant experience, both for those who are joining the Church through RCIA, and those who guide and support the participants throughout the process.

“Every time we have a class, it makes my faith stronger,” says Mary Geffre, who coordinates RCIA at St. James Basilica with her husband, Deacon Tom Geffre. “Seeing these people so excited about coming into the Church, it makes my faith stronger within me.”

RCIA, is the process by which people come into the Catholic Church. Those who take this journey are called candidates and catechumens – candidates have been baptized in a non-Catholic church, or baptized as Catholics but have not received the rest of their Sacraments of Initiation, while catechumens have not been baptized in any faith.

The RCIA process is split into two semesters. The first semester begins in September and runs through November, and the second semester starts in January and culminates at the Easter Vigil celebration. This year, there are around 10 candidates and catechumens making the journey into



*Deacon Tom and Mary Geffre*

the Church. Throughout the two semesters, the attendees have been meeting with Deacon Tom and Mary, as well as a few other presenters, each week to discuss a wide variety of topics about the Catholic faith, including the Creed, the Ten Commandments, the sacraments and more.

“My background is education, and I enjoy teaching,” Deacon Tom says. “Even though I’m retired from the teaching

profession, there’s still an enjoyment from this interaction that one has with students, if you will, and the enjoyment of getting people to understand and see what it is that the Church is all about. It’s an exciting thing to see in the eyes of the people.”

The candidates and catechumens also participate in several activities and rites throughout the RCIA process, including a series of events called “scrutinies” that take place during Lent. Candidates are presented to the congregation on the “scrutiny” Sundays.

“People in RCIA that are seriously considering joining the Church, they are presented to the parish,” Deacon Tom says. “The parishioners pray for them and help them through this process. It’s not only exciting for us as instructors, it’s also exciting for the parishioners to see these people added to our fold. It’s exciting for all of us.”

The candidates and catechumens are now approaching the culmination of their journey at the Easter Vigil, when they will receive their Sacraments of Initiation and come into full communion with the Catholic Church and our St. James Basilica parish family.

“It’s very exciting when they actually come into the Church,” Mary says. “I told one of the ladies that got baptized that sometimes I regret that I’m a ‘cradle Catholic,’ because the ceremonies are so beautiful. And being able to go through that with them is very rewarding.”



*Fr. Sean Mulligan shares a discussion with RCIA student Kyle Mallory.*



# ST. JAMES BASILICA OF JAMESTOWN

622 1 Ave S · Jamestown, ND 58401  
701-252-0119 · [www.stjamesbasilica.org](http://www.stjamesbasilica.org)

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## Weekend Eucharist

### *Saturday Vigil*

4:30 p.m. Eucharist

### *Sunday*

8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 6:00 p.m. Eucharist

## Daily Eucharist

*Monday thru Friday* - 12:10 p.m. Eucharist

*Saturday* - 8:00 a.m. Eucharist

## Reconciliation

*Monday thru Friday* - 11:40 a.m. - 12 noon

*Saturday* - 3:30 p.m.

Address Service Requested

## Bringing Christ to Others *continued from front cover*

Many of the people I visit are people I have known for years. Now is my chance to help them. This ministry is so special to me. It's not hard work, or a task or a job. It is truly a pleasure!"

As Glory ages, she continues to find that this ministry provides an ideal way for her to serve God and others, regardless of her physical capacity.

"I think many people like to bring the Eucharist to others because they want to share the things they are able to do, and help others grow closer to Christ," Glory says. "Even though I have had some health issues, this ministry is something I am able to do."

Glory along with other faithful Extraordinary Ministers Deidra Brown, Karen Maag, Monica Lubbers, Ken Tanata, Pat Cherney, Angela Madsen, Marilyn Lobsinger, Deacon Tom Geffre and Sr. Michaelleen Jantzer share in the joy in bringing the Eucharist to the homebound, assisted living and nursing homes residents. More volunteers are greatly needed to bring the presence of Christ to those desiring Him. For more information, please contact Administrative Assistant Bonnie Laber at 701-252-0119.



*Ministers serve at Roseadele*

